

SICC MEETING MINUTES

Truman Building, Room 500

November 14, 2003

Members Present

Elizabeth Spaugh
Valeri Lane
Melodie Friedebach
Kris Hotchkiss
Joan Harter
Anne Marie Wells

Lisa Robbins
Gretchen Schmitz
Sue Allen
Rick Horrell
Leslie Elpers

Margaret Franklin
Darin Preis
Pam Byars
Kathy Fuger
Sherl Taylor

DESE Staff Present

Mary Corey
Bill Connelly
Debby Parsons

Pam Williams
Dale Carlson
Angie Nickell

Karen Allan

Members Not Present

Vicki Walker

Call to Order and Welcome - Elizabeth Spaugh and Valeri Lane called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. Introductions were made.

Approval of SICC Minutes - Susan Allen made a motion to approve the minutes. Lisa Robbins seconded. Motion passed.

FY 04 and 05 Budget Projections (including current status) (handouts) - Dale Carlson shared with the Council information concerning the current budget and projected budgets for FY 04 and 05. The Council felt that the revised format was helpful. He indicated that at the end of January 2004, DESE would be out of funds for the First Steps program. A \$7.8 million supplemental request has been made to the legislature, but DESE does not expect to receive word on it until March or April. There will be funding issues for a couple months.

Melodie Friedebach indicated that DESE would be notifying providers in December. DESE will ask that they continue to provide services during this period of time. It was suggested that individuals from the First Steps community contact their legislators in late December or early January showing their support of the program.

Dale Carlson discussed with the Council a handout called "IDEA Part C Percentage of All Children Under the Age of Three Receiving Services 12/01/01." It was a comparison of Missouri to other states that he received at a recent Part C conference he attended. He also shared with the Council a handout showing the comparison of First Steps (Early Intervention) data across states with restrictive eligibility (data from NECTAC). He indicated that NECTAC was still working on the data and that there are many factors to be considered when looking at this data (cost of living, etc). He also handed out data showing an analysis of costs paid through the CFO by SPOE Regions and Direct Service Type for FY 2004. Valeri Lane asked if DESE could total some of the items. This report will continue to be updated to assist in watching for trends.

Medicaid - Dale Carlson indicated that the Medicaid funds have not been coming in at the rate DESE had estimated a year ago.

Family Cost Participation - Dale Carlson indicated that DESE, because of timing issues, drafted some legislation that will be discussed with the Department of Insurance. At the recent Part C conference that Dale

attended, there was a great deal of discussion related to cost participation and insurance. States are handling this differently and success seems to depend on how the insurance law is written in that state and whether it allows for billing under early intervention. States with success have added legislation to bring early intervention into the insurable area. The language of the drafted legislation is currently broad enough to cover all possible options. Options include charging a fee for services on a sliding income scale to be managed at the CFO level or making early intervention services eligible for coverage under insurance (rehabilitative vs. educational discussion).

Melodie Friedebach suggested that after SICC members have had an opportunity to review the draft legislation, they could begin talking with families to get their feedback and input. Facilitators could also share this information with their LICCs to get their feedback. Important information to gather from these discussions would be: (1) who was there (parents, providers, community partners, etc); (2) what were the major concerns; and, (3) what ideas and recommendations did they have? This information could be shared at the January meeting.

A few Council members felt since there was no cost to parents for a public education that there should not be a cost to them for the First Steps services. Melodie Friedebach indicated to the Council that the First Steps program is an optional program in the state of Missouri. It is not a federally mandated program. It was suggested that a list serve message be sent to get information out to people.

At the September meeting, the Council recommended that DESE create a couple committees to review the First Steps oversight and cost containment. Valeri Lane indicated that she and Elizabeth Spaugh had recently received an email from the Division stating that they would not be able to form these two committees because of the short timeframe to develop legislation and to protect potential bidders/confidentiality of information.

Phase I contracts - The rebid is being developed. DESE is reviewing the RFP for the regional consultants (facilitators) contracts.

Monitoring - Pam Williams indicated that during the past two weeks the Compliance Section conducted Part C monitorings for Phase II SPOEs. SPOEs were selected based on a group of risk factors (child complaints/due process, anecdotal information, 45 day timelines, eligibility/high medical, disproportionality, and transition).

Prior to each on-site, SPOE data was reviewed at DESE and individual child files were identified to be reviewed on-site. Child files were selected at random. On-site the files were reviewed for the following:

- Transition
- 45 day Timeline
- Content of IFSP
- Eligibility
- Service Coordinator
- Provision of Notice
- Data accuracy

Pam indicated that the preliminary findings have been fairly consistent. This information has not been finalized and the SPOEs have not received any feedback yet. In general, it was determined that people were working very hard and were trying to implement the process as intended. Findings reflected that most things were happening the way they should. However, there were a few issues regarding:

- lack of documentation for the basis of eligibility
- 45-day timeline being exceeded
- some issues with the outcomes on the IFSPs
- transition issues for children with late referrals (meetings were not being held or were not held in a timely manner).
- no documentation indicating that parents were asked if the LEA could be invited or that the LEA was invited

Pam Williams indicated that a preliminary report would be shared with the Council at the January meeting.

One onsite follow-up has taken place for Phase I SPOEs, and there will also be desk reviews with the other Phase I SPOEs in the coming weeks. Issues that surfaced during the monitoring continued to be issues in

the follow-ups (i.e., eligibility documentation, 45-day timelines, data entry, and forms not completed accurately, and some concerns in the area of transition).

Working Lunch - Melodie Friedebach suggested that after the Phase I SPOE bid is released, that the Council may want to review and recommend suggestions for the Phase II rebids. It was suggested that DESE send out a listserve message once the bids are announced.

Facilitator Reports – The LICC regional reports are posted on DESE’s webpage at <http://dese.mo.gov/divspeced/FirstSteps/LICCregionpg.html>.

CFO

Data Report - Early next week the data report will be updated with the most recent information.

System Changes – DESE will be meeting with the CFO next week.

Matrix Update - Debby Parsons indicated that a two-page document was sent out via e-mail (First Steps listserve, etc.) regarding the matrix. The CFO was one step behind in making some of the changes in the matrix due to a miscommunication. The search capacity by service and provider type was incorrectly entered into the matrix and will be corrected shortly. Providers that do not submit the information requested will be removed from view on the matrix. The First Steps list serve will be revised reflecting the now required e-mail address for providers.

It was mentioned that providers have been expressing concerns about the lack of security in the matrix website (e-mail address is not secure). Mary Corey indicated that DESE is working on this situation. The software was developed by another state and only allowed for an individual to have one e-mail address. It was not developed for people with multiple listings and e-mail addresses. The CFO is working on a software change to the matrix so that it will allow multiple e-mail addresses for each person. DESE has not “blackened out” any of the providers that have not updated their matrix page but the Council felt that it is time to begin doing it. Once a provider updates their matrix page, they would no longer be blocked from view.

Service Coordinator Training Needs – Vicki Wilkes prepared and handed out some information (STRS database) to the Council at the request of DESE. She is with the First Steps Training Coordination project. Their contract will be ending February 4, 2004. Training is a very important piece. Elizabeth Spaugh commended Vicki on the wonderful job she has done on the training coordination piece.

The Division cannot renew the contract; it will have to be rebid. DESE wanted to make some database decisions before moving forward with the rebid. DESE has been comparing the Enrolled Provider database to the STRS database. DESE will be contacting individual service coordinators informing them of what trainings they are still required to attend.

DESE has created two videos (Forms and Orientation). Karen Allan indicated that the orientation video would be online from December 15-29. The assessment and scoring will also take place online. DESE will begin taking registrations the first two weeks of December and confirmations will be sent on the 13 and 14 of December. DESE is targeting the approximately 900 people who need the training and will be contacting individuals directly via e-mail. DESE will then be contacting service coordinators with no caseload to determine if they want to be providers and, if so, they will need to be trained next. There will be no fee for individuals taking the modules via video.

DESE is currently discussing how to update the current information that the providers and service coordinators are using. Could make just a few needed changes or looking at possibly doing a complete update of the training information so that it contains the most current/accurate information. Debby handed out a piece of paper and asked that anyone interested in assisting with these discussions sign up. DESE will conduct a conference call, hopefully, in mid-December (colleges, university, districts, etc.).

Providers - DESE has talked with facilitators about provider recruitment at state, local, and regional levels. Karen Jacobi indicated that the facilitators have developed and used some provider recruitment but DESE needs to discuss and clarify what is needed. A conference call may be needed.

LICC - Margaret Franklin volunteered to work on a survey of issues regarding cost containment, providers, etc. that could be sent out by the facilitators to the LICC.

Facilitators were asked to send general questions to DESE prior to Council meetings. This would allow DESE time to collect the answers and present a response at the next meeting. The comments and concerns should be sent to DESE in a format that will allow DESE to easily type in a response.

The LICC Update will be listed at the beginning of the agenda in January. DESE will send out the replies to the LICC concerns with the January agenda.

DESE Reports

OSEP – Verification was received stating OSEP will visit DESE during the second week of December.

Part B/Part C State Plan Changes - Changes will go to the State Board on November 20-21. The public hearings have already taken place.

Nominations for SICC – Sheryl Taylor has been serving as a parent representative on the Council. She works for DMS and will instead serve as the official representative for Christine Rackers.

Old Business – A request was made to have an update on the recommendations, thoughts, and suggestions from the reconvening of the Redesign Task Force this past summer.

Joan Harter made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Leslie Elpers seconded. Meeting was adjourned at 3:15 p.m.